

Jump into Fall

Taste of Third and Art Walk: Self-guided walking tour of downtown Chula Vista restaurants with taste samples, local artists and live music from 5 to 8 p.m. on Sept. 9. Tickets are \$12 per person. Sponsored by the Downtown Business Association (619) 422-1982.

Celebrate Chula Vista: Enjoy this family festival featuring great food, live music and entertainment, local business vendors and children's games and activities. The evening comes alive with an orchestral concert and a spectacular fireworks display. Sept. 11, noon – 9 p.m. in Marina View Park. Sponsored by the Chula Vista Chamber of Commerce, City of Chula Vista and Port of San Diego. For more information, please call (619) 420-6603.

Bonitafest: Annual festival features a two-hour parade with marching bands, crafts, games, and food booths on Sept. 25. Join the fun on Bonita Road between Otay Lakes and Willow from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Sponsored by Bonita Business and Professional Association (619) 472-8520.



Arturo Barrios Invitational: Competitive and recreational runners compete along 5K and 10K courses at the Chula Vista Yacht Harbor on Oct. 24 at 7:30 a.m. Please call Elite Racing at (858) 450-6510 for further information.

Beautify Chula Vista Day: Volunteer to beautify our city on Saturday, November 6! Participants will be teamed up to paint out graffiti, pick up litter and clean up Chula Vista. The event kicks off at Chula Vista Community Youth Center, located on 465 L Street, between 8 - 9 a.m. Volunteers will complete registration, meet their team leader,

attend an opening ceremony and be directed to designated clean-up sites around the City. All participants will receive a free commemorative T-shirt and refreshments. Volunteers must provide their own transportation. Pre-registration is required. Please call (619) 691-5187 by October 18 to pre-register and watch the City's website for further details.



For more information about events taking place in Chula Vista throughout the year, call the City's special events hotline at (619) 585-5682; or visit the "Events and Attractions" page on the City's Web site at www.chulavistaca.gov. ■

Toughest Two Minutes in Sports

Chula Vista firefighter Jeremy Czapinski's race against time begins with the shrill blast of an air horn and ends with a demanding rescue that leaves him breathless. Czapinski fights the clock and exhaustion while training for the Firefighter Combat Challenge—an international competition also known as the *toughest two minutes in sports*.

The international endurance contest is designed to test a firefighter's physical stamina and demonstrate how demanding the job can be. Czapinski, a determined 25-year old, is currently ranked number ten in the worldwide competition.

Loaded down with 30 pounds of fire gear and wearing an oxygen tank, Czapinski is off and running at the sound of the air horn. He races up five flights of stairs with a heavy hose



pack on his back, dashes to a window and hoists a 50-pound bundle from the ground below. Before someone can yell "firefighter," Czapinski hauls it up again and runs down the stairs and out of the building. Next, he grabs a shot hammer and drives a 165-pound eye beam a distance of five feet. Dropping the hammer, he zigzags his way through an obstacle course. At the end of the line, Czapinski drags a long fire hose to a target and sprays it with water. For the finale, the firefighter runs over to a 180- pound dummy and drags it to safety.

Can you guess how long Czapinski was on the move? His time was an unbelievable 1:32—less than two minutes!

Yet, if he wants to win the World Firefighter Combat Challenge in November, which takes places in Las Vegas, he'll have to do better than that. Last year's winner came in at 1:28.

Czapinski has been featured on ESPN and a local news network. "Chula Vista is such a dynamic place, and this exposure



helps showcase the City," he said. Firefighters train and compete on their own time and at their own expense. "I'm very fortunate to have the support of the City staff and my fellow firefighters," added Czapinski.

He became a firefighter three years ago. After watching a Combat Challenge on television and meeting a few San Diego competitors, Czapinski decided to give it a try. What's the hardest part of the competition? "The first and last part—waiting for the horn to go off and rescuing the victim—are toughest for me," he admits. "I just want to be across that finish line and be done with it. It hurts every time you do this."

Don't forget to look for Czapinski in November as he competes to be #1. ■

Power

continued from front page

Across the country, there are about 2,000 utilities offering rates that are on average 15% less than their corporate counterparts.

After carefully considering the advice of nationally recognized consultants, councilmembers took decisive action that paves the way for a combination of public energy strategies—Community Choice Aggregation (CCA) and Greenfield Development.

As a CCA, the City would be able to purchase electric energy for its residents and businesses and deliver power using SDG&E's distribution and transmission network. Chula Vistans could buy energy from either the City or SDG&E—they

would have a choice.

Greenfield Development would allow Chula Vista to supply energy to newly developed areas of the city using the distribution system built by developers. Currently, developers deed that system to SDG&E. Under Greenfields, developers would turn it over to the city instead—at no cost.

Why does the City want to change the way it does business with SDG&E? Because increasing rates financially impact every family and business in Chula Vista. SDG&E has the highest utility rates in California and the third highest in the nation. Consumers will continue to see their energy bills climb if SDG&E continues to negotiate huge rate hikes that affect all of their customers. Recently, the company proposed a \$100

million hike in base revenues.

Consumer advocates support Chula Vista's position and future energy strategy. One of them, Michael Shames, Executive Director of the Utility Consumers Action Network (UCAN), praised the city for being "on the right track."

While UCAN and other energy experts applaud the City's efforts, SDG&E is openly critical of Chula Vista's energy strategy. "We will not be intimidated, nor will we back away from the opportunity to do what is in our City's best interests," stated Mayor Padilla.

To read the consultants' reports and learn the latest information about Chula Vista's energy strategy, visit the City's Web site at www.chulavistaca.gov. ■

Chula Vista

Spotlight

City Council
Stephen C. Padilla, Mayor
Patty Davis
John McCann
Jerry R. Rindone
Mary Salas
City Manager
David D. Rowlands, Jr.



The Chula Vista Spotlight newsletter is published five times per year and is distributed as a public service to residents and businesses by the City of Chula Vista. Copies are also available at various locations around the city. Send comments or inquiries to the Office of Communications, City of Chula Vista, 276 Fourth Avenue, Chula Vista, CA 91910. The city's Web page address is www.chulavistaca.gov.

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Spotlight

CITY OF CHULA VISTA

FALL 2004

Taking Control of our Power

Do you want a say in your energy future? City leaders think Chula Vistans share their concern about skyrocketing energy bills and reliability of service. That's why the City is considering a proposal to provide public power to its residents and businesses.

Operating as a public utility, Chula Vista could stabilize increasing rates, and with public input, make its own decisions about how savings are spent to benefit the community. A number of possibilities exist—everything from rebates and reduced energy rates to incentives to attract businesses and promote renewable energy sources like solar power. Savings could also be reinvested in important City services such as police, fire, parks and libraries.

"Our strategy is to give the residents of Chula Vista a choice in their energy provider and a voice in their energy future," said Mayor Stephen C. Padilla. "There is the potential of saving Chula Vistans millions of dollars in energy costs in the years to come. And with local control, the public has the opportunity to decide how savings will be distributed. Our citizens benefit—not San Diego Gas & Electric shareholders."

*Please see **Power**, inside*



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Urban Core

Imagine downtown Chula Vista as a vibrant urban setting with upscale restaurants, boutiques, first-class office buildings, and an exciting variety of new housing opportunities, such as live-work lofts and luxury condominiums. This is the vision City leaders share for Chula Vista's "urban core."

An Urban Core Specific Plan is being developed for the northwestern area of the city, including downtown and its surrounding neighborhoods. The plan, a blueprint for both planners and developers, will streamline entitlements and permits.

"We want to invite capital investment to our City," said Laurie Madigan, Director of Community Development. "You can't invite

someone to dinner without setting the table. This plan sets the table so that we're prepared for investors."

The urban core is generally the area bordered by C Street to the north, L Street on the south, Interstate 5 to the west and Del Mar Avenue to the east. The plan will focus on major commercial and residential districts such as Broadway and Third Avenue.

Revitalization efforts are already underway. Last year, the Redevelopment Agency implemented several key projects, including the eye-catching monument sign that spans Third Avenue. At the corner of Fourth Avenue and F Street, the new police headquarters building makes a

strong statement about the City's own commitment to investing in the urban core.

"We are poised for change. Revitalization is key to our economic success," said Madigan. "We're talking about housing opportunities and office space, as well as entertainment and cultural arts venues."

Public participation will be an important part of the planning process. According to Madigan, "The public will be able to shape the vision in several workshops that will be held to get their input."

The specific plan should be completed sometime this winter. Visit the City's Web site at www.chulavistaca.gov for more information about the urban core planning process and for public workshop dates and locations. ■

Around town...

Numbers to Know

When Chula Vista residents call their fire department for help, they are talking directly to the City's own dispatchers. Since late June, calls are no longer answered by a dispatch center in East County. The Chula Vista Fire Department is now operating its



own state-of-the-art communications center, located in the new Police Headquarters building at 315 Fourth Ave.

For years, Chula Vista was a member of the Heartland Communications Facility Authority, but last year City leaders felt the need to make a change. Since Chula Vista continues to grow, demands for service are expected to climb over the next decade.

"Having our own system committed to the residents of Chula Vista will allow us daily, direct control of our resources and operations," said Chula Vista Fire Chief Doug Perry.

The following is a list of new telephone numbers for the Chula Vista Fire Communications Center:

Emergency Line: 9-1-1

7-Digit Emergency Line: (619) 476-2599

Public Line (non-emergency): (619) 476-2322

An Option for Sewer Customers

In July 2003, the City of Chula Vista changed its sewer billing rates for single-family homes from a flat-fee to a "consumption based" fee rate. The new rates more closely reflect the actual amount of wastewater your household produces. With the new rates, most customers find it pays to conserve water, and that conservation results in lower water and sewer bills. However, the City understands there may be special circumstances that require some residents to occasionally use additional amounts of water. In order to address those special needs, the City has recently made available an appeals process to allow residents to request a change in their sewer charge. Forms may be found on the City's Web site at www.chulavistaca.gov/sewer.html or pick up a form from the Engineering Division located in the Public Services Building at 276 Fourth Avenue.

Planning for a University

Aggressive efforts are underway to create a center for higher learning in Chula Vista. On September 9, the City Council will hold a workshop to consider an overall university development concept for land that has been designated for university-related uses in Otay Ranch.



JASON HARRON

Christmas in October

Every October, hundreds of volunteers grab a paintbrush or a hammer and join with local businesses to make a wish come true for a handful of homeowners. The annual Christmas in October program helps preserve and revitalize houses and communities.

Repairs and improvements are free to selected homeowners who qualify for the program. Participants are often disabled, elderly or have low-incomes.

This year's goal is to renovate ten Chula Vista homes on October 16. In the past, some houses are painted or get a new roof. Often windows, tile, pipes and bathroom fixtures are replaced. New water heaters, smoke detectors and refrigerators may be installed. As one thankful Chula Vista homeowner noted, "Words are really inadequate to express my feelings for all the helpful things you arranged for me this past week. I cannot recall ever feeling so blessed by so many."

For applications (due September 7) and information about Christmas in October, call (619) 691-5044 or (619) 691-5213. ■

Honor Our Veterans!

On Veteran's Day, November 11, 2005, the City of Chula Vista will officially dedicate the new Veteran's Park in honor of all veterans, active duty personnel and reservists in the armed forces as well as police and fire services. This 12-acre park will be located close to the Chula Vista Veterans' Home along East Palomar Street near Medical Center Drive.

Planning for Veteran's Park includes a prominent "Walk of Honor" walkway paved with bricks inscribed with the names of veterans. The City of Chula Vista is making these bricks available to individuals and businesses wishing to honor a veteran. Each brick



GPU Enters Home Stretch

The City's General Plan Update (GPU), which will guide Chula Vista's future growth and development for the next 15 to 20 years, is a massive effort that is nearing completion. This month, drafts of the GPU document and the Environmental Impact Report (EIR) will be released for review. Over the next few months, the public will have the opportunity to comment on drafts during hearings before the Planning Commission and City Council.

From the very beginning, the public played an important role in the update effort. Over the past two years, Chula Vistans helped identify the community's priorities and shape the recommended plan. In April 2002, they turned out for

placed in the walkway will be engraved using a patented process that is guaranteed to never fade, chip, oxidize or peel.

"We are very pleased to offer this means of honoring our veterans," said Recreation Director Buck Martin. "It provides a permanent way of recognizing those whose service means so much to all of us."

Each brick will bear the name of one veteran, active duty person or reservist and their branch of service. The minimum donation for a single Commemorative Brick is \$50. Contributors also may wish to receive a miniature Replica take-home brick for an additional \$25 donation. Replica bricks can be used as a paperweight, given to a loved one or



friend as a treasured memento, or serve as an everyday reminder.

All net proceeds from this project will equally benefit two charitable organizations: the Friends of Chula Vista Parks and Recreation, and the Chula Vista Veteran's Home Support Foundation.

May 1, 2005, is the deadline for all orders of bricks to ensure they will be in place for Veteran's Park's official dedication in the fall of 2005. For more information and an order form, go to www.chulavistaca.gov/rec and click on Veteran's Park or call (619) 409-5979. ■

SR 125 South Update



The roar of heavy equipment is the sound of progress along the SR 125 South—an ambitious highway project designed to ease traffic congestion in South County. Chula Vista-based California Transportation Ventures, Inc. (CTV) is building the new highway, which connects SR 54 to SR 905 in Otay Mesa. The 12.5-mile stretch of new road is expected to open by the fall of 2006.

Motorists driving along SR 54 have seen blasting, rock crushing and grading activities. Olympic Parkway commuters have probably noticed drainage improvements underway and the "trailer city" construction staging area. On East H Street, materials are stockpiled for the construction of

bridges and interchanges.

The project is being built in two phases at a cost of more than \$800 million. The first phase of the project, known as the Gap and Connector, will complete the SR 54 highway in the Bonita/Spring Valley area and extend the SR 125 south, approaching San Miguel Road. The Gap is expected to open in the summer of 2005. Phase II is a 9.3 mile toll road, which will run from San Miguel Road to the future 905 highway connector in Otay Mesa.

The Community Advisory Committee meets monthly to provide input on the highway project.

Information on the Committee and construction updates are available at www.sr125.com. ■



Four citizens groups were instrumental in getting the job done including the following:

- Steering Committee
- Economic Development Subcommittee
- Environmental, Open Space and Sustainable Development Subcommittee
- Infrastructure and Services Subcommittee

More than 50 individuals

with a variety of backgrounds and interests participated in approximately 70 public meetings.

"These volunteers have contributed an enormous amount of time and effort to making Chula Vista a better community," said Jim Sandoval, Director of Planning and Building. "We are also grateful for the ideas and comments received from the general public to help formulate the plan."

The Steering Committee's recommendations for future land use were presented to the public and discussed at a June 21, 2004 meeting. For more information about future hearings and meetings, and how you can stay informed and involved, visit the General Plan Update link at the City's Web site, www.chulavistaca.gov, or call the General Plan Update phone line at (619) 409-5486. ■